IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 3-6, 9, 11, 16, and 24-41 as follows. Please add claim 43 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising: ~~of controlling processing load in a packet data network, said method comprising the steps of:~~

setting a load control information in a predetermined field of a message;

routing said message in said packet data network;

checking said load control information on the routing path of said message; and

selecting a processing resource of said packet data network in response to the result of said checking ~~step~~ of said load control information.

2. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein said predetermined field is a subfield of a user part of an address header.

3. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein said predetermined field is a via branch of a ~~SIP~~ session initiation protocol message.

4. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 3, further ~~comprising~~ comprising:

~~the step of~~ copying said load balancing information from another predetermined field to said predetermined field.

5. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 2, wherein said address header is an ~~URI~~ uniform resource indicator of a ~~SIP~~ session initiation protocol ~~Route~~ route header.

6. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 2, further ~~comprising the step of~~comprising:

providing a plurality of subfields in said user part for conveying different types of said load control information.

7. (Original) A method according to claim 6, wherein said user part is parsed and divided into said subfields.

8. (Original) A method according to claim 6, wherein at least one of structure, order and usage of said subfields is predetermined.

9. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 6, wherein said ~~subfield~~ subfields are separated by a predetermined bit string, character, or character string.

10. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein a virtual address is shared by a plurality of processor nodes.

11. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 10, wherein said processor node has a call state control functionality of an ~~IP~~ internet protocol based cellular network.

12. (Original) A method according to claim 2, wherein said load control information comprises a first port number indicating a first port for receiving a request message.

13. (Original) A method according to claim 2, wherein said load control information comprises a second port number indicating a second port for receiving a response message.

14. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein said load control information comprises a first information indicating whether a session of said message is already existing.

15. (Original) A method according to claim 14, wherein said load control information comprises a second information indicating an identification of said existing session.

16. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 14, wherein said load control information is stored in a ~~Route~~ route header field, a ~~Via~~ via header field, or a ~~Contact~~ contact header field of a ~~SIP~~ session initiation protocol message.

17. (Original) A method according to claim 14, wherein said load control information is a hidden information not meaningful to other networks.

18. (Original) A method according to claim 14, wherein said load control information is set as a part of a host name of a header field.

19. (Original) A method according to claim 14, wherein said load control information is set as a parameter of a header field.

20. (Original) A method according to claim 14, wherein said load control information is set as a port number of a header field.

21. (Original) A method according to claim 20, wherein said port number is used for differentiating a first message from subsequent messages.

22. (Original) A method according to claim 14, wherein said load control information is set as an extension header field to a header field.

23. (Original) A method according to claim 14, wherein said load control information is set in a payload portion of said message.

24. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 15, further ~~comprising the steps of~~comprising:

extracting said second information in response to a detection of said first ~~information,~~information; and

using said second information for said selection ~~step.~~of a processing resource.

25. (Currently Amended) A method ~~of distributing load control information in a packet switched network, comprising the steps of:~~, comprising:

~~a)~~ creating a first load control information in a first network element;

~~b)~~ setting said first load control information into a predetermined field of a message;

~~c)~~ routing said message to a second network element;

~~d)~~ storing said first load control information in said second network element;

~~e)~~ creating a second load control information in said second network element;

~~f)~~ setting said second load control information into a predetermined field of a second message;

~~g)~~ routing said second message to said first network element; and ~~and;~~

~~h)~~ storing said second load control information at said first network element.

26. (Currently Amended) An apparatus, ~~A network device for controlling processing load in a packet data network, said device~~ comprising:

~~checking means for checking a~~a checker configured to check load control information provided in a predetermined field of a message; and

~~selecting means for selecting~~a selector configured to select a processing resource for said message in response to said checking ~~means~~unit.

27. (Currently Amended) ~~A network device~~ An apparatus according to claim 26, wherein said ~~network device~~apparatus comprises a call state control functionality of an ~~IP~~-internet protocol based cellular network.

28. (Currently Amended) ~~A network device~~ An apparatus according to claim 26, wherein said ~~selecting means~~ selector is ~~arranged~~ configured to select a predetermined processor node to which said message is distributed.

29. (Currently Amended) ~~A network device~~ An apparatus according to claim 26, wherein said ~~selecting means~~ selector is ~~arranged~~ configured to initiate creation of a new session.

30. (Currently Amended) ~~A network device~~ An apparatus according to claim 29, wherein said load control information comprises a first information indicating whether a session of said message is already existing.

31. (Currently Amended) ~~A network device~~ An apparatus according to claim 30, wherein said load control information comprises a second information for identifying said existing session.

32. (Currently Amended) ~~A device~~ An apparatus, comprising:~~for transmitting~~ a transmitter configured to transmit a message to a packet data network, wherein said ~~device~~apparatus ~~being arranged~~is configured to set into a predetermined field of said message a load control information ~~for selecting~~to select processing resources of said packet data network.

33. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~A device~~ according to claim 32, wherein said ~~device~~ apparatus comprises a call state control functionality of an ~~IP~~ internet protocol based cellular network.

34. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~A device~~ according to claim 33, wherein said call state control functionality is a serving call state control functionality or a proxy call state control functionality.

35. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~A device~~ according to claim 32, wherein said ~~device~~ apparatus is ~~arranged~~ configured to set said load control information in a user part of a header address of said message.

36. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~A device~~ according to claim 35, wherein said header address is a ~~SIP URI~~session initiation protocol uniform resource indicator.

37. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~A device~~ according to claim 32, wherein said ~~device~~ apparatus is ~~arranged~~ configured to set said load control information in a host name, a header parameter, a port number, or an extension header field of a header portion of said message, or in a payload portion of said message.

38. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~A device~~ according to claim 37, wherein said load control information comprises a first information indicating whether a session of said message is already existing.

39. (Currently Amended) An apparatus ~~A device~~ according to claim 38, wherein said load control information comprises a second information indicating said existing session.

40. (Currently Amended) A system ~~for controlling processing load in a packet data network, said system~~, comprising:

a first network element ~~for setting~~configured to set a load control information in a predetermined field of a message to be routed in said packet data network; and

a second network element ~~for checking~~ configured to check said load control information on the routing path of said message~~;~~, and ~~for selecting~~ configured to select a processing resource of said packet data network in response to the result of said checking ~~step~~of the load control information.

41. (Currently Amended) A system ~~for distributing load control information in a packet switched network, said system~~, comprising:

a first network element ~~for creating~~configured to create a first load control information and ~~for setting~~configured to set said first load control information into a predetermined field of a message; and

a second network element ~~for receiving~~configured to receive said message, ~~for storing~~to store said first load control information, ~~for creating~~to store a second load control information, ~~for setting~~to set said second load control information into a predetermined field of a second message, and ~~for routing~~to route said second load control information to said first network ~~element;~~element,

wherein said first network element is ~~adapted~~ configured to store said second load control information.

42. (Original) A system according to claim 40, wherein said first and second network devices comprise a call state control functionality.

43. (New) An apparatus, comprising:

checking means for checking load control information provided in a predetermined field of a message; and

selecting means for selecting a processing resource for said message in response to said checking means.